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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 743
By Jordan

A RESOLUTION to honor Vanderbilt University men's basketball team seniors, Drew Maddux, Austin Bates and Billy DiSpaltro.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to pay tribute to three senior collegiate student-athletes who have achieved excellence both on the court and off; and

WHEREAS, Drew Maddux, Austin Bates and Bill DiSpaltro led the Vanderbilt Commodores to a sterling 20-13 overall record during the 1997-1998 campaign and to the quarterfinal round of the National Invitational Tournament; and

WHEREAS, a sharpshooting guard from Nashville, Drew Maddux distinguished himself as the third generation of his family to letter in varsity athletics at Vanderbilt; and

WHEREAS, during his outstanding senior season, Drew was named first team All-SEC by the SEC coaches, the Associated Press and *Basketball Weekly* and was selected to the Rainbow Classic All-Tournament team after averaging 21.0 points per game and leading the Commodores to a third-place finish in the tournament; and

WHEREAS, he was also named an Honorable Mention All-American by *Basketball Weekly* and was a member of the prestigious SEC Academic Honor Roll; and

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WHEREAS, Drew Maddux deftly managed the reigns of leadership as the Commodores leading scorer and inspirational leader; he always wanted the ball during pressure situations and was a clutch performer when the game was on the line; and

WHEREAS, during the 1997-1998 campaign, Drew ranked fourth in the SEC in scoring (16.8 points per game); fourth in field goal percentage (45.6), ninth in 3-point field goal percentage (35.4), third in 3-point field goals per game (2.4), tenth in assists (4.1% per game), and third in steals (2.1 per game); and

WHEREAS, he contributed to the illustrious history of Vanderbilt basketball by finishing fifth in all-time scoring (1,689 points); first in steals (214); sixth in field goals (571), fifth in field goals attempted (1,348), fifth in 3-point field goals made (226), and fourth in 3-point field goals attempted (641); and

WHEREAS, this multi-talented player also started 112 consecutive games dating back to his freshman year; and

WHEREAS, recognized as one of the best centers to ever play at Vanderbilt, Austin Bates possesses excellent post-up moves and a soft-shooting touch, and he consistently knocked down the jumper from the baseline this season; and

WHEREAS, a native Tennessean from Waverly, "The A Train" finished 31st in Vanderbilt basketball history in scoring (1,020 points), eleventh in field goal percentage (.505) and seventh in blocked shots (0.55 per game); and

WHEREAS, Austin scored double figures in 24 games during the 1997-1998 season and led the Commodores in scoring 11 games and in rebounding 9 games; and

WHEREAS, during his superlative senior season, he ranked second in the SEC in field goal percentage (51.0); he was also the Commodores' second leading scorer (13.8 points per game) and second leading rebounder (5.5 rebounds per game); and

WHEREAS, Austin also distinguished himself by leading the team in blocks (30) and charges taken (12); and

WHEREAS, in addition to being an outstanding athlete, Austin Bates is also a stellar scholar, having earned his Bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering last year, and he is presently pursuing a Master's degree in Management of Technology; and

WHEREAS, a physically imposing power forward from Mount Vernon, New Jersey, Billy DiSpaltro possesses great athleticism, size and strength, yet he has a surprisingly soft-shooting touch; and

WHEREAS, he is an accurate shooter from the 3-point range and beyond and he led the team in dunks; and

WHEREAS, during his exemplary senior season, "Billy D" was named to the SEC Academic Honor Roll and was selected as the "Most Underated Player in SEC" by Athlon; and

WHEREAS, during the 1997-1998 campaign, Billy DiSpaltro led the Commodores in rebounding (5.7 rebounds per game) and was third in scoring (11.8 points per game); and

WHEREAS, the acknowledged Chair of the team's Italian Caucus, Billy was the team's best free-throw shooter (87-107 .813) and ranked second in the SEC in this important category; and

WHEREAS, he proved his big heart and his extraordinary talent as a basketball player by posting double figures in 16 games this season; he also posted seven career double doubles, two of them back-to-back this season; and

WHEREAS, Billy DiSpaltro etched his name into the annals of Vanderbilt hoops history by finishing fifth all-time in field goal percentage (53.1); tenth in free-throws made (339); tenth in free-throws attempted (441) and eighth in blocked shots (0.43 blocks per game); and

WHEREAS, Billy finished his meritorious career at Vanderbilt just 49 points shy of the 1,000-Point Club, a record he would have most assuredly attained if injury had not forced him to miss the last seven games of the season; and

WHEREAS, Drew Maddux and Austin Bates subsequently led the Commodores to victories over St. Bonaventure (the game in which Austin Bates scored his 1,000th point) and highly regarded Wake Forrest (Bates - 9 rebounds, Maddux - 17 points) in the NIT; and

WHEREAS, these three exceptional young men should be recognized for their selfless dedication to teamwork, and their meritorious efforts in leading the Commodores to yet another excellent basketball season; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE-HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we hereby honor Vanderbilt Commodore men's basketball seniors, Drew Maddux, Austin Bates and Billy DiSpaltro, commend them upon their estimable work ethic, both in basketball and in life, and wish them all the best in their future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.